

France Bilateral Meeting with Barbara Pompili, Minister of Ecological Transition

Location: U.S. Bilateral Meeting Room (TBC)

Attendees: *France* – **Barbara Pompili, Minister of Ecological Transition**, the Minister's Diplomatic Advisor, and one or two staff

EPA – **YOU**, Dan Utech, Dorien Blythers, Jane Nishida

Potential Topics:

Ex. 5 Deliberative Process (DP)

Notes: You previously met with Minister Pompili on the margins of the G20. The purpose of this meeting is to continue high level talks and discuss potential areas of collaboration.

Press: Closed meeting



Bio: Barbara Pompili, Minister of Ecological Transition

Minister Pompili [Pom-PI-li] has served as the Minister of the Ecological Transition under Prime Minister Jean Castex since July 2020. She previously served as member of the National Assembly for the 2nd constituency of Somme from 2012 to 2016 and from 2017 to 2020. She began her career in 2000, joining the Greens. During the presidential campaign of Noel Mamere, in 2002, she was chosen to take charge of relations with the press. After an attempt at the legislative elections of 2007, she became deputy secretary general of the group of the Democratic and Republican Left in the National Assembly, from 2007 to 2012.

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Talking Points

Introductory

Ex. 5 Deliberative Process (DP)

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Background

President Macron has led his government with a strong commitment to addressing climate change, which has in fact resulted at times in strong street protests and lawsuits. In early July 2021, the French government had to drop its plan to enshrine climate change in the Constitution, due to significant opposition. President Macron had planned a referendum on the topic and had hoped to enact this constitutional change before the presidential elections next year.

Following the French elections in 2017, President Emmanuel Macron renewed and elevated the power of the French environment and energy minister, establishing it as the third ranking ministerial position in the government. Macron has had a challenging time, however, keeping an environment minister in place and Minister Barbara Pompili is the 4th minister to serve in this position in as many years.

Senior EPA officials in the previous Administration did hold a few initial high-level meetings with French officials, however, differences on climate change were quickly apparent and the French repeatedly emphasized their strong feelings about the importance of continued U.S. participation in the Paris Agreement. As a result, EPA cooperation and engagement with France at this level was not active during the last administration.

Expert level and local level engagement have continued with France, however, for example in areas of research and smart growth/urban development. On a technical cooperation level, the French Agency for Food, Environmental and Occupational Health & Safety (ANSES) also works regularly with EPA, requesting EPA expert input on a range of environmental studies and research. At present, ANSES has requested EPA input on a micro air sensor report as well as issues around conventions for atmospheric particle size fractions. Additional recent technical engagement with France has included work conducted by an EPA/ORD researcher who served as an Embassy Science Fellow working with the French Ministry of Health on Lyme disease related research in the fall of 2018. EPA staff did participate in a science expert roundtable with France, organized by State Department, on climate mitigation and circular economy this fall, under the US-French Science and Technology Agreement.

France held the G7 presidency in 2019 and set a very ambitious program, with climate as the central theme. France also worked strongly to advance dialog on inequality, biodiversity and plastics which are key French priorities under the Macron presidency. France is also one of the countries in Europe helping lead the international push for a new international treaty on the environment, especially related to marine litter and plastics.

In 2019 and 2020 France held The Citizens Convention for Climate which discussed reducing France's carbon emissions by 40% from its 1990 levels in a spirit of social justice. It was initiated in response to the Yellow Vest protests to the fuel tax. The members of the convention were 150 randomly selected citizens designed to be representative of the French public across six demographic dimensions: gender, age, socio-economic background, education level, location type, and province.

France currently holds the rotating EU Council Presidency, until June 30, 2022, and French officials have been actively pushing EU decision making on issues such as new battery and waste battery regulation, clean energy transition and the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM). As French elections start in April 2022, this is a dynamic time in French policy and politics.